

Laurel Hill Update

By the Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight Committee

June 2005

The Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight Committee was established by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in February 2005 to monitor the development of the Reformatory and Penitentiary area at Laurel Hill, adjacent to Silverbrook Road in Lorton, VA.



This committee-sponsored electronic newsletter is provided to keep citizens informed about adaptive reuse and other developments at Laurel Hill.

June 13 Oversight Committee Meeting

Responses to Requests for Expression of Interest

The County received 16 responses to the Request for Expression of Interest (ROI) by the June 3, 2005 deadline. The respondents include prominent development firms in the region. The oversight committee is very encouraged by the number of responses. The ROI's have been posted to the County government's Laurel Hill web link. The County intends to invite respondents to provide additional information which will be used to help inform the Request for Proposal.

The Request for Proposal process, which requires more detailed planning and financial information from potential candidates, is scheduled to begin this fall.

Historic Preservation

The committee voted to support the concept of the proposed historic district at Laurel Hill to the National Register of Historic Places as proposed in the draft application. Formal support will be discussed pending review of the completed nomination by the Oversight Committee and the general public.

Architectural Review Board - Standards and Guidelines

The Oversight Committee voted to send a letter to the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board (ARB) encouraging completion of the draft standards and guidelines for the proposed county historic overlay district by Fall 2005. The ARB also will be encouraged to hold at least one public meeting in the South County area to allow public review and comment about the guidelines.

Project Manager for the Reformatory and Penitentiary Area

The Oversight Committee voted in support of the job description for the project manager to oversee the adaptive reuse development process at the Reformatory and Penitentiary area (Committee members appreciated the County's acceptance of our recommended language in the job description). Oversight Committee member Doug Wrenn was appointed to the applicant review process.

The hiring of the project manager for the Reformatory and Penitentiary area should be later this year.

Laurel Hill Project Coordinator

During the Oversight Committee meeting, Chris Caperton was introduced as the County's project coordinator for the entire Laurel Hill site, including the County's interagency team. Chris brings a wealth of professional experience to the position.

Laurel Hill Fact Sheet

The Oversight Committee approved an updated version of the fact sheet, which describes the land use and process recommendations for the Reformatory and Penitentiary area. The updated fact sheet will be posted to the County government's Laurel Hill web link.

Next Oversight Committee Meeting - June 27

The next meeting of the Oversight Committee will be 7:00 p.m., Monday, June 27, in Community Room # 3 at Supervisor Hyland's Mt. Vernon District office.

Other Laurel Hill News

The Workhouse Arts Center

The Lorton Arts Foundation is in the final stages of its lease negotiations with Fairfax County for its arts, cultural and educational concept in the former prison buildings on Ox Road (Route 123). According to Tina Leone, Executive Director, L.A.F. plans to have funding arrangements in place by September for the first phase of development and operation of the Workhouse Arts Center at Lorton. You can visit the Lorton Arts Foundation web site at www.lortonarts.org for more information.

Historic Preservation at Laurel Hill

The Fairfax County Architectural Review Board, in conjunction with the Fairfax County History Commission and the Lorton Heritage Society are moving forward with the nomination of a 512-acre district at Laurel Hill to the National Register of Historic Places. The historic district would include the Reformatory and Penitentiary area adjacent to Silverbrook Road as well as the Occoquan facility adjacent to Ox Road (Route 123).

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources will hold a public hearing about the nomination between October 23 and November 7. A final decision about the nomination is expected by the National Park Service in late February or early March 2006.

Listing on the National Register of Historic Places may help some adaptive reuse projects qualify for historic tax credits.

The Oversight Committee's next electronic newsletter will be published in July.

Additional information about the land use plans for Laurel Hill, including parkland and adaptive reuse areas is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/laurelhill/